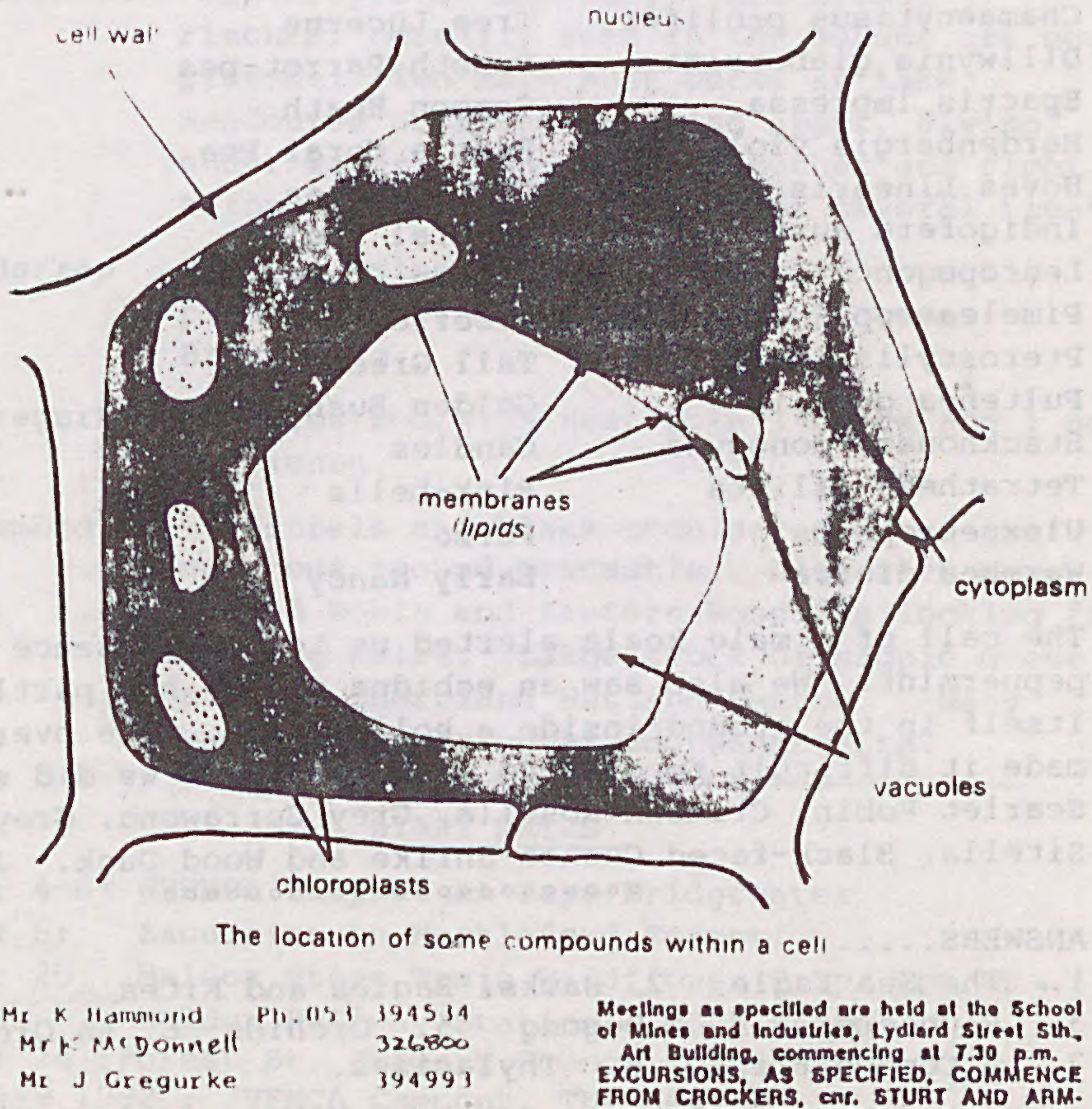
Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat
Incorporated.

October 1991

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting	October 4	B.U.C. Students - Biological Resource Management Projects..
Meeting	November 1	Stella Bedggood Mem. Lecture.
Excursion	October 6	Muckleford Forest C/maine FNC
	November 2	Ditchfield The Glut Campout. or Day Visit Nov. 2-3.
Excursion	November 20	Melbourne Botanic Gardens And Government House.



The location of some compounds within a cell

President	Mr K Hammond	Ph.053 394534
Vice Pres:	Mr K McDonnell	326800
Secretary:	Mr J Gregurke	394993
Treasurer:	Mrs F Williamson	327631
Editor:	Mr L Fink	052 861319

Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth., Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m. EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY*

CANADIAN FOREST EXCURSION.

The excursion on Sunday 22nd September was to the Canadian Forest on the eastern edge of Ballaarat.

We first called at Pryor Park. The Ballarat City Council has recently agreed to a scheme which eill see some of the logged area planted with native plants and part used by the neighbouring golf course. An area which has been mowed in the past has a good variety of remnant native plants.

The Canadian forest is an open forest of messmate and peppermint with a wide variety of shrubs and gerbs making up the understorey. Plants found in flower included::

Acacia aculeatissima	Thin-leaf Wattle
Acacia dealbata	Silver Wattle
Acacia melanoxylon	Blackwood
Acacia stricta	Hop Wattle
Acrotriche serrulata	Honeypots
Chamaecytisus prolifer	Tree Lucerne
Dillwynia glaberrima	Smooth Parrot-pea
Epacris impressa	Common Heath
Hardenbergia violacea	Purple Coral Pea
Hovea Linearis	Common Hovea
Indigofera australis	Austral Indigo
Leucopogon virgatus	Common Beard-Heath
Pimelea spp	Riceflower
Pterostylis longifolia	Tall Greenhood
Pultenea gunnii	Golden Bush-pea
Stackhousia monogyna	Candles
Tetratheca ciliata	Pink-bells
Ulex europaeus	Furze
Wurmbea dioica	Early Nancy

The call of a male koala alerted us to its presence high in a peppermint. We also saw an echidna which had partly buried itself in the ground inside a hollow tree. The overcast day made it difficult to observe many birds but we did see Scarlet Robin, Crimson Rosella, Grey Currawong, Grey Fantail, Sitella, Black-faced Cuckoo-Shrike and Wood Duck. JG

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ANSWERS......

1. The Sea Eagle 2. Hawks, Eagles and Kites
3. Plunderer 4. A Dugong 5. Orchids 6. An Orchid
7. A Common Brick. 8. Thylacines.

FIELD REPORTS: SEPTEMBER MEETING

Pat Murphy -Peregrine Falcons are nesting at Piggoreet. The male bird is getting lighter in colour. African Boneseed spreading in the Devil's Kitchen area.

Florence Williamson - Silvereyes in Albizzia at Ballarat North.

Helen Burgess- At Kennington Reservoir; 4 young, brown cygnets. Unsure if they are early for this season or a late hatching from last year. Swan observed at Lake Wendouree flicking weed into the air for 10 minutes.

Ken McDonnell - Silvereyes at Invermay. Red-browed Finches, normally seen in the autumn are now present. Two male Musk Ducks at Lake Wendouree observed swimming apart, diving under water, then emerge together and fight before repeating the behaviour several times.

Frank Harrap -At Mt. Helen 7 Gang-Gang Cockatoos still present after 6 months; also 2 common Bronzewing.

John Gregurke - Yellow Robin on nest with 1 chick and 1 egg at Clunes.

Ken Hammond - Kestrels and Black-shouldered Kites are numerous around Newcastle. Also seen were Hooded Robin and Eastern Rosellas looking for nesting holes. Large flock of Magpie Geese seen at Shortland Wetland Centre. Many wattles flowering around Wangaratta.

DIARY DATES

October 4-6: WVFNCA Campout at Cape Bridgewater.
October 6: Excursion to Muckleford Forest.
October 20 Maldon Steam Train Wildflower Trip; 1pm at Maldon Railway Station. Cost $4.00.
October 24 :Forest St. Primary School "bush-day".
March 6-9 1992 : VFNCA Campout, The Basin.
NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING - OCTOBER 24 at 8pm. 1 John st. Wendouree.

EXCURSION Reports. 8 SEP. 1991.

The excursion was to the southern block of the Bungal State Forest, also known as the Dolly Creek Block. The grey morning soon gave way to a pleasant sunny day.

The stimulus of Gary Cheers' lecture excited interest in the range of mosses and lichens to be seen, but identifications were very few! We explored the forest - mainly stringybarks - with wattles, greenhoods and sundews in flower. A moist gully with a small creek provided plenty of floral and faunal interest, especially a healthy fox, a yellow robin pair nesting and a good example of *Sphagnum*.

In the afternoon we followed the margin of the forest block looking at the birdlife.

JG kept the plant list and KH listed the birds.

KMcD.

A good number of birds were sighted at Dolly Creek Forest, in fact 25 for the day, conditions were quite pleasant, plenty of sunchine and not much wind, the first half hour of our stroll was rather quiet, then suddenly a pair of Little Eagles were sighted circling above the forest canopy. Striated and Spotted Pardelotes were seen and heard, down in a shady gully a pair of Yellow Robins had built a nest among the bracken stems, two eggs were seen by some of our group, Pallid Cuckoo and also Fantail Cuckoo were heard calling in this area but no sightings were made, during our lunch break a Golden Whistler came visiting and some of our newer members were able to see him at close quarters some of the interesting birds on our afternoon walk included Olive Backed Oriole, White Winged Chough, Horsefield Bronze Cuckoo and a pair of Brown Thornbills busily building a nest on a rather precarious spot, the pair had chosen to build among the dead leaves on a broken limb which was lying in the bed of a small creek, we wished them well in their venture, all in all a lovely day spent in good company.

K.H.

DOLLIES CREEK FOREST PLANT LIST

These flowering plants were seen on the excursion to Dollies Creek Forest on 8th. September. 1991.

Acacia aculeatissima	Thin-leaf Wattle
Acacia melanoxylon	Blackwood
Acacia paradoxa	Hedge Wattle
Acacia pycnantha	Golden Wattle
Acrotiche serrulata	Honeypots
Astroloma humifusum	Cranberry Heath
Bossiaea prostrata	Creeping Bossiaea
Drosera whitakeri	Scented Sundew
Epacria impressa	Common Heath
Eucalyptus obliqua	Messmate
Eucalyptus ovata	Swamp Gum
Eucalyptus radiata	Narrow-leaved Peppermint
Eucalyptus viminalis	Manna Gum
Hardenbergia violacea	Purple Coral Pea
Hypoxis glabella	Yellow Star
Kennedia prostrata	Running Postman
Pterosstyis nana	Dwarf Greenhood
Pterostyis nutans	Nodding Greenhood
Styphelia Strigosa	Peach Heath
Tetratheca ciliata	Pink-bells
Wurmbea dioica	Early Nancy

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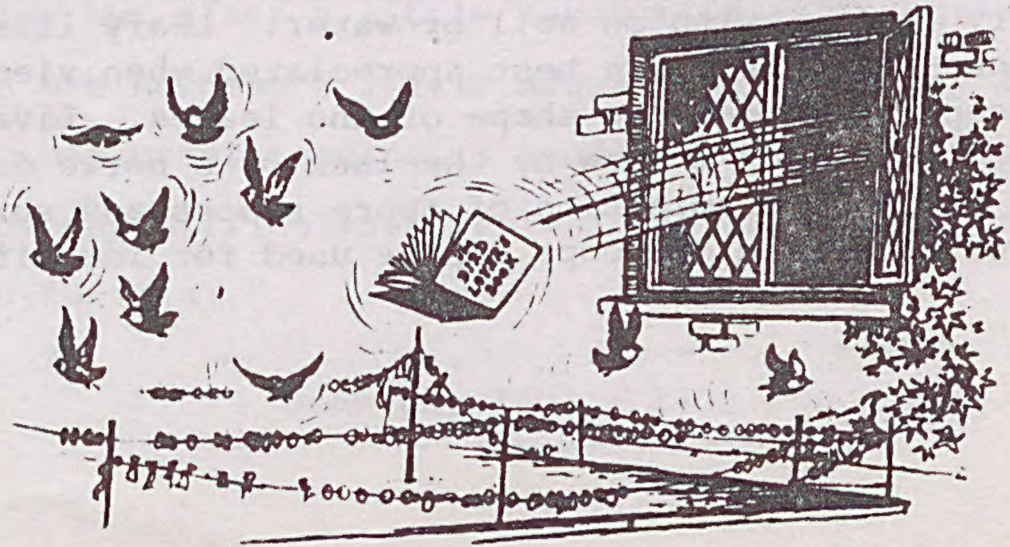

MOSSES, LIVERWORTS AND LICHENS.

The guest speaker at the September meeting was Gary Cheers from the Maryborough Field Naturalists Club. He illustrated his talk on mosses, liverworts and lichens with very high quality slides.

Mosses, liverworts and lichens live in damp habitats due to their simple structure and method of reproduction. Wet forests and fern gullies are an ideal environment but even in Clunes forest there are probably 30 mosses, 12 lichens and 12 liverworts. Most of the species found in Australia are endemic.

Mosses and liverworts have two stages in their life cycle. The gametophyte is the common moss plant which we see. These produce male and female gametes either on the same plant or separate plants. Fertilization produces the sporophyte which grows saprophytically on the gametophyte. In a capsule at the top of the sporophyte asexual spores are produced. When released, the spores are spread by the wind. Under the right conditions the spores germinate into a green thread-like growth called a protonema. Buds from the protonema growing on soil develop into gametophyte plants.

Mosses are often colonisers of bare ground following fire. They stabilize the soil and trap dust and seeds which allows the germination of other plants.

Slides were used to show the diversity of mosses. One large moss grows up to 25cm and resembles a miniature pine tree. Other mosses have pinnate leaves. Many leaves are only one cell thick with hyaline (transparent) tips. Characteristics used in classification include leaf colour, pimples on leaves, shape of spore capsule and teeth on capsule. One species has a horrible smell which attracts flies to spread the spores and another species have bright red capsules to be given the common name of Apple Moss.

Liverworts have two main forms. Thallus liverworts have flat leathery leaf growing on soil or water. Leafy liverworts are more moss-like. They are best appreciated when viewed under a microscope to reveal the shape of the leaves. Liverwort can be distinguished from mosses by the lack of a nerve down the centre of the leaves. Examination of spore shapes and surface patterns under a microscope can be used for identification.

Lichens consist of a symbiotic relationship of a fungas with an algae living embedded in it. Neither partner could live alone because the algae would dry out and the fungi are not photosynthetic. The algae is usually a Nostoc and the fungi anascomycete or cup fungus. Identification often requires chemical reactions. Lichens need a solid base to grow on, either rock or solid barked trees but not on stringybark. Crustose lichens stick firmly to their substrate. they grow extremely slowly, often only millimetres per year. Lichens show a range of characteristics in shape, colour (some have no green pigment visible), texture (some a jelly-like) and reproductive structures. JG

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QUIZ-TIME

Who is often called Erne, especially in crosswords?
What is a Raptor?
What does Raptor mean?
What is the name of a gerbivorous mammal found in Tropical areas of the Indian ocean and in the Northern areas of Australian Seas?
The ICHNEUM Wasp is an important pollinator of which plants?
What is CALEANA major?
This question needs some extra thought - What is a common object called that is 23cm long 11 cm wide and 8 cm deep?
What animals are on the Tasmanian Coat of Arms?

§§

QUOTATION.

"The treasures of nature are inexhaustible. I know that a new study at first seems very vast, intricate and difficult: but after a little resolution and progress, after a man becomes a little acquainted, as I may say so, with it, his understanding is wonderfully cleared up and enlarged, the difficulties vanish, and the thing grows easy and familiar."

John Ray 1627 - 1705

BOTANICAL NOTES October 1991

FAMILY ORCHIDACEAE (orchids)

A very large cosmopolitan family - the largest (i.e. the greatest nimber of species) family of plants with 500 - 600 genera and perhaps 30,000 species. There are at least 80 genera in Australia. Orchids may be terrestrial (growing in soil), epiphytic (growing on the trunks or limbs of forest trees), or saprophytic (obtaining nutrients from humus or organic matter). Most of the epiphytes are found in the tropics. Some introduced species are available for gardeners. Most of the terrestrial orchids shoot annually from rhizomes, tubers or thickened rootstocks.

In the Ballarat area C. Beauglehole records species in 14 genera. In South Australia species belonging to 22 genera are found.

Flowers often show very specialized adaptations for insect pollination. The flowers are bisexual, zygomorphic (very rarely regular), in spikes or inflorescences that may be a raceme, a spike or a panicle.

FLORAL STRUCTURE.

Perianth : 6 parts in 2 whorls. free or united in various ways. The 3 segments of the outer whorl are called sepals. The 2 lateral segments of the inner whorl are called petals. and the remaining segment is the labellum.

Androecium : Stamens (one or two in almost all Australian species.)

Gynoecium : The styles, stigmas and stamens are united into a more or less erect, fleshy structure called the column in the centre of the flower. The ovary is inferior and unilocular. There are numerous ovules

Fruit : A capsule.

H.H.